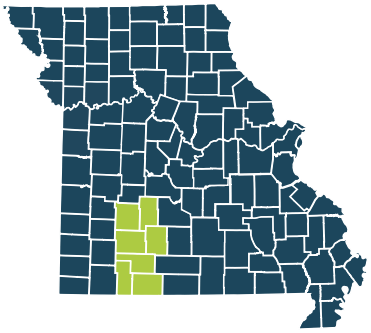


COMMUTING PROFILE
OZARK REGION
JULY 2026

Overview

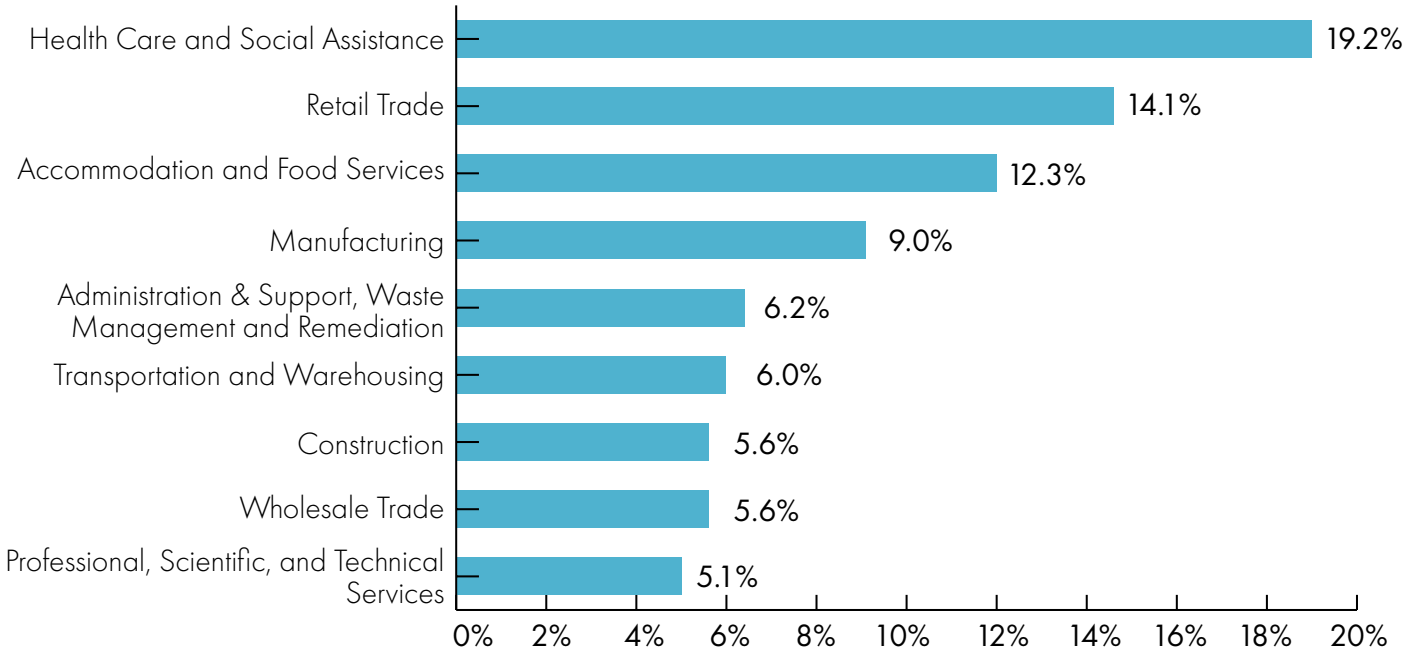
The Ozark Workforce Development Area (WDA) consists of seven counties, including Greene, which is home to the region's largest city (Springfield). The top industry in the Ozark region is *Health Care and Social Assistance*, which accounts for 19.2 percent of the region's employment. In 2023, there were 215,426 total private primary jobs** in the Ozark WDA, making up 9.4 percent of private primary jobs in Missouri. Nearly half (49.0%) of workers employed in the region were aged 30 to 54. Workers aged 29 or younger were 28.7 percent of the workforce and those 55 or older were 22.3 percent. In 2023, 47.4 percent of private primary jobs in the Ozark WDA paid more than $3,333 per month. Of the remaining jobs, 16.9 percent paid $1,250 per month or less and 35.8 percent paid between $1,251 to $3,333 per month. In 2023, there were more men (51.4%) than women (48.6%) in the Ozark WDA workforce employed at the private primary jobs.

Over half (52%) of employees living in the Ozark WDA commuted fewer than 10 miles to work, while 31.4 percent commuted 10 to 50 miles to work and 16.6 percent commuted more than 50 miles.

Industry

Health Care and Social Assistance was the largest employing industry in the region with 41,331 jobs (19.2% of total private primary jobs in the region). *Retail Trade; Accommodation and Food Services; Manufacturing; Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation;* and *Transportation and Warehousing* were other major industry sectors having at least 6 percent of the region's employment share. Springfield, Branson, and Ozark were the top cities for employment in the Ozark WDA.

Top Ozark WDA Industry - Private Primary Jobs Percentage



Where the Ozark WDA Labor Force Works and Lives

There were 202,908 workers that lived in the Ozark WDA in 2023. Of the 215,426 workers employed in the Ozark WDA in 2023, 75.7 percent commuted to work from within the region. The remainder (24.3%) commuted into Ozark WDA from homes outside of the region.

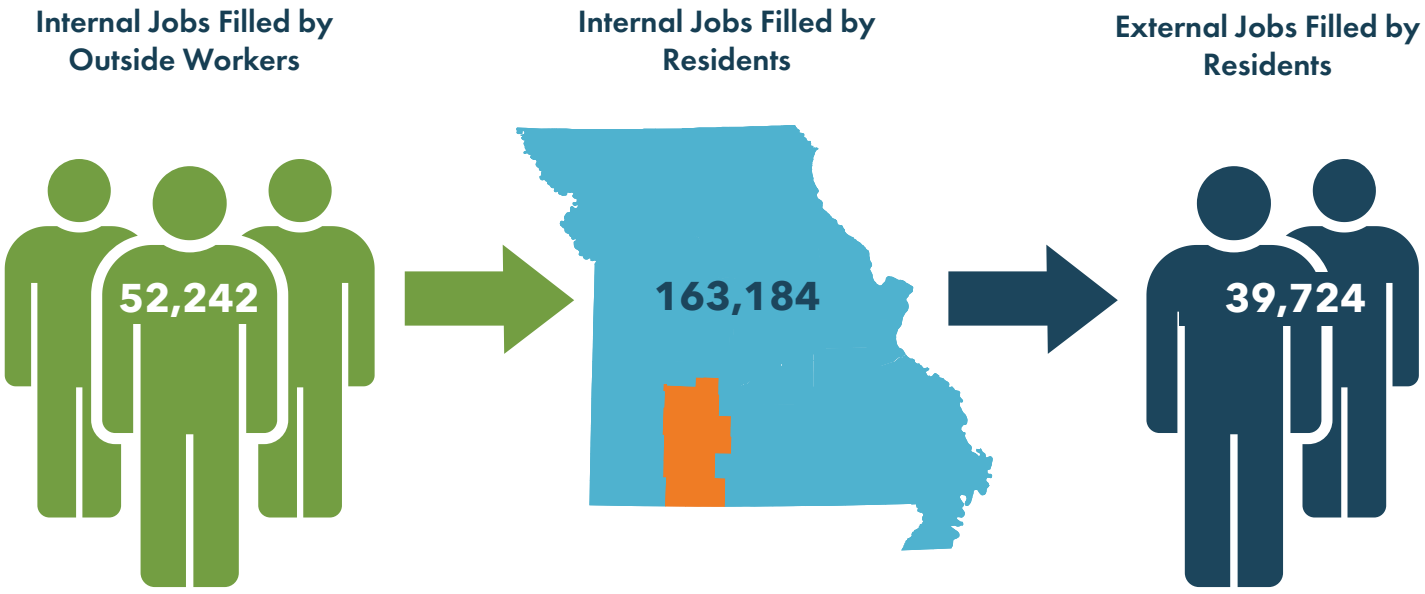
Description	2023	
	Count	Share
Ozark WDA Labor Market Size (Private Primary Jobs)		
Employed in the Ozark WDA	215,426	100.0%
Living in the Ozark WDA	202,908	94.2%
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	12,518	-
In-Area Labor Force Efficiency (Private Primary Jobs)		
Living in the Ozark WDA	202,908	100.0%
Living and Employed in the Ozark WDA	163,184	80.4%
Living in the Ozark WDA but Employed Outside	39,724	19.6%
In-Area Employment Efficiency (Private Primary Jobs)		
Employed in the Ozark WDA	215,426	100.0%
Employed and Living in the Ozark WDA	163,184	75.7%
Employed in the Ozark WDA but Living Outside	52,242	24.3%

Of the region's residents who were in the workforce, 19.6 percent, or 39,724, commuted to jobs outside of the region. The Ozark WDA attracted 52,242 workers from outside of the region. Over 163,000 Ozark WDA residents lived and worked in the region.

The top five counties where Ozark WDA workers resided (in descending order) were Greene, Christian, Taney, Webster, and Stone. Greene County had 41.7 percent of the region's workforce living there in 2023.

Inflow/Outflow

Overall, 202,908 employees lived in the Ozark WDA and 215,426 workers were employed in the region, resulting in a net inflow of 12,518 workers into the region.



The following table shows the worker composition for the job inflow and outflow groups as well as worker characteristics of the interior job flow. Of the 163,184 individuals who lived and worked in the region, 28.0 percent were aged 29 years or younger, 49.4 percent were aged 30 to 54 years, and 22.7 percent were aged 55 years or older. Over 60 percent worked in the *Services* industry.

Ozark WDA Description	2023	
	Count	Share
Outflow Job Characteristics (Private Primary Jobs)		
External Jobs Filled by Residents	39,724	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	11,147	28.1%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	19,290	48.6%
Workers Aged 55 or older	9,287	23.4%
Workers Earning $1,250 per month or less	6,974	17.6%
Workers Earning $1,251 to $3,333 per month	12,940	32.6%
Workers Earning More than $3,333 per month	19,810	49.9%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	7,092	17.9%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	13,056	32.9%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	19,576	49.3%
Inflow Job Characteristics (Private Primary Jobs)		
Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	52,242	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	16,166	30.9%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	24,967	47.8%
Workers Aged 55 or older	11,109	21.3%
Workers Earning $1,250 per month or less	10,052	19.2%
Workers Earning $1,251 to $3,333 per month	18,506	35.4%
Workers Earning More than $3,333 per month	23,684	45.3%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	6,459	12.4%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	17,532	33.6%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	28,251	54.1%
Interior Flow Job Characteristics (Private Primary Jobs)		
Internal Jobs Filled by Residents	163,184	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	45,662	28.0%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	80,545	49.4%
Workers Aged 55 or older	36,977	22.7%
Workers Earning $1,250 per month or less	26,302	16.1%
Workers Earning $1,251 to $3,333 per month	58,542	35.9%
Workers Earning More than $3,333 per month	78,340	48.0%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	25,781	15.8%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	38,595	23.7%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	98,808	60.6%

Commuter Pattern

The top 10 counties where Ozark WDA workers living in the region are employed at their private primary jobs (in descending order) were Greene, Taney, Christian, Polk, Stone, Webster, St. Louis, Jackson, Jasper, and Barry.

The table below indicates that many residents commuted to another county for employment. All but Greene and Taney counties had at least half of their residents commuting outside their county of residence for work. Larger cities, such as Springfield and Branson, attracted workers from the surrounding counties. The counties containing these cities also had a lower percentage of workers who left the county to find work. The Ozark WDA has access to Interstate 44 and U.S. Highway 65, which improves the ability of Ozark Region residents to commute to their workplace.

Ozark WDA	
Percent of Ozark WDA Residents Working Outside of Home County	
Christian	**83%**
Dallas	**87%**
Greene	**24%**
Polk	**72%**
Stone	**80%**
Taney	**44%**
Webster	**79%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2023*), URL: https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/

**2023 is the latest year for which LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (commuting data) is available from the U.S. Census Bureau. To maintain the consistency of data in this report, all relevant data used is also from 2023, although later data for some data points was available.*

LEHD data infrastructure tracks jobs as its primary unit instead of people. As such, the system naturally captures more than one job per person when available in the data. The **dominant (or primary) job for an individual is defined as the job that earned the individual the most money. Constructed this way, ***the number of primary jobs should be equal to the number of workers.***

This report was prepared by the staff of the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC). All data in this report was current at the time of publication and is subject to revision. This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the recipient and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.